Disability Positive

Marketing and Communication Strategy

2022-2030

Revision History

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# Introduction

**Disability Positive** *(hereinafter referred to as the* ***“Company”****)* has committed to ambitious growth as set out in the Company Strategy approved by members in 2020 (revised and extended in April 2022), across three objectives to define our work; our strategy is about what we want to achieve over the next ten years (2020 – 2030).

We want a world that is Disability Positive, where people with lived experience of disability and long-term conditions, like us, have services to help with everyday life, being part of their local community and looking after their own wellbeing. We also want to listen and share people’s experiences to influence positive change in government policy.

We have committed to increasing our reach and increasing our turnover by 2030. We intend to do this by looking at several specific areas of growth over the next 8 years, by working collaboratively with representative organisations that think like us, as outlined in our funding and income generation strategy.

In order to realise this growth, we will be increasingly reliant on marketing and communication to raise the profile of the Company. Our marketing and communication strategy, sets out the means to promote income generating functions alongside promotion of fundraising opportunities, to guide and target our marketing activities to potential new clients, relevant commissioning authorities, decision makers and other Disabled People’s Organisations.

This marketing and communication strategy is designed to complement the Strategy. It identifies proposed targets, tactics, action plans, communications methods, and control measures to achieve those targets.

A set of marketing objectives have been developed within this strategy. These are

summarised in Section 2 overleaf.

# Marketing Objectives

1: Carry out a review of key features of difference between the offer of Disability Positive and key players as competitors. Agree value proposition for each service (see Appendix C).

2: The marketing strategy will review how we can increase the number of unique visitors to the website compared to 2020/21, with a view to support the increase of Company reach to disabled people.

3: The marketing strategy will review how we can increase the number of followers on social media platforms compared to 2020/21.

4: Marketing tactics for the proposals put forward for increasing income will be reviewed and implemented during the lifetime of the strategy with a view to supporting achievement of an additional £xx by March 2030 compared to 2020/21.

5: Carry out a review of the key value proposition specifically for marketing new business to businesses/partners.

6: The marketing strategy will review how we can increase membership of the Company March 2030 compared to 2020/21, to ensure that our services, opportunities and voice can be designed, delivered and developed together with people with lived experience of disability and long-term conditions.

7: Marketing tactics for fundraising and corporate sponsorship will be reviewed and implemented during the lifetime of the strategy with a view to achieving xx% of our income as fundraising and corporate sponsorship, by March 2030 compared to 2020/21.

# Current Marketing Situation

Disability Positive, founded in 1992, markets services, opportunities and a voice to disabled people. Rather than directly challenging established larger service providers operating in this market, the Company has focused on a niche market, as a disabled people’s organisation; this being a representative organisation of disabled people, where 100% of its members have lived experience of disability and it is majority led, managed, governed and staffed by disabled people, thus designing, delivering and developing services with disabled people as equal partners.

The Company hit the market with two services, but the Company now markets twelve different services and a trading arm, many of which have been introduced over the last few years. The Company has grown each year since being founded.

Currently, (as reported in the National Disability Strategy) 1 in 5 people: 20%, have lived experience of disability. This is an increase from the 2011 census data of 17.9% reporting lived experience of disability. This percentage is expected to increase further as a result of long-covid; however, 2021 census data will not be available until 28 June 2023.

Competition is more intense now than ever with more and more profit-making organisations setting up similar services that can be operated at large scale, with many able to take contracts as loss-leaders, in comparison. In order to grow and develop the Company, Disability Positive must carefully target specific segments with features and benefits valued by those segments to better promote our unique selling proposition.

**Market Description**

There are a large number of community sector organisations (165,758) across the UK, but by comparison, there are only a small number of disabled people’s organisations (c200).

The community sector spends the vast majority of its £58.7bn annual income on charitable activities. Income and spending have increased consistently since 2000/01, but the rate of growth has slowed. Voluntary sector spending has grown at a faster rate than income in recent years, reaching £56.9bn.

The number of bigger organisations has continued to grow, and they receive an increasing amount and share of the sector’s total income. Major and super-major organisations (>£10M income) are responsible for over half the sector’s expenditure, similar to their share of income.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The market is also impacted by a number of different factors including:

* competition from profit-making organisations offering cheaper services.
* lower discretionary income available for charged-for services as changes in welfare benefits have impacted household incomes.
* procurement legislation has resulted in growing use of tendering as opposed to use of grant funding.
* increased pressure on Adult Social Care has resulted in reduced budgets for delivery of services.
* shift from outputs to outcomes to ensure the customer journey as the main focus.
* changing public attitude towards charities
* local authorities increasingly looking to grant contracts previously given to local organisations to out of area, and in some cases, profit making organisations.

Disability Positive’s market consists of Disabled Adults (19+); Disabled Young People (0 -19); Carers; Local Authorities including relevant Commissioning leads, Social Care Workers, Councillors and relevant Portfolio Holders; Integrated Care Partnerships including Commissioning leads for Personal Health Budgets, Wellbeing and Prevention and Health workers; Policy Makers including local MPs, the Disability Unit of the Cabinet Office and the Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work; other businesses and sectors and of course, Company staff. Disability Positive has established a strong base of loyal customers who want the independent, person-centred and peer support approach. Provided the Company meets the needs of disabled people and is well-located, a successful charitable business can be built.

Table 1 below shows how Disability Positive addresses the needs of primary targeted customer segments that can enable it to attract relevant clientele through careful promotion.

*Table 1: Segment Needs and corresponding benefits of Disability Positive*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Targeted Segment** | **Customer Need** | **Corresponding Benefits** |
|  |  |  |

**Product Review**

Disability Positive current services, opportunities and voice, set out in **Appendix A**. These all offer the following key features:

* We ensure services, opportunities and voice are coproduced with disabled people as equal partners in the design, delivery and development of policies and services that affect them “nothing about us, without us”.
* Public benefit -social objectives to benefit a community, social value generated is reported.
* We are domain experts with a long history (30 years) of supporting people to live independently and remove the societal barriers that affect them.
* We understand because we know it matters as we have lived experience of disability too. We are a representative organisation of Disabled People, so we are run by disabled people for disabled people.
* Our services/opportunities and voice enable people to take control of their own lives and improve self-confidence, health and wellbeing, self-confidence and dignity.
* We are a trusted source of information, advice and support.
* We love working with others who think like us.
* We are values based: Positive, Collaborative, Representative, Ambitious and Trustworthy. We are Disability Positive!

**Competitive Review**

We do not seek to compete with other representative organisations of disabled peoples (also known as DPOs). Further work will be required to look at the key features of difference between the offer of competitors and Disability Positive. Table 2 below shows the key direct and indirect competition for Disability Positive.

*Table 2: Direct and Indirect Competitors for Disability Positive*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Services** | **Direct** | **Indirect** |
|  |  |
| **Opportunities** |  |  |
| **Voice** |  |  |

Objective 1: Carry out a review of key features of difference between the offer of Disability Positive and key players as competitors. Agree value proposition for each service (see Appendix C).

Despite the competition, Disability Positive believes it has a relevant brand image and can gain recognition among the targeted segments. The Company offer strong points of differentiation – we know it matters as we live with disability too, reflecting the representative nature of the organisation, we deliver services in coproduction with disabled people, we are domain experts, and we provide a person-centred approach.

**Channels Review**

**Website**

A 5-year comparison (2015 – 2020) of ONS data shows that internet usage has increased significantly (c.30%) for disabled adults compared to a much smaller increase (3%) for non-disabled adults [[2]](#footnote-2). Although the latest ONS data from 2020 highlights that the number of UK disabled adults using digital means is still lower than non-disabled adults; it does evidence a narrowing in the digital divide between disabled and non-disabled adults [[3]](#footnote-3):

* 91% of non-disabled UK adults and 84% of disabled UK adults now use the internet.
* 86% of non-disabled UK adults and 76% of disabled UK adults use a device other than a computer, such as smart phone/tablet.
* 87% of non-disabled UK adults and 78% of disabled UK adults send and receive emails.
* 82% of non-disabled UK adults and 79% of disabled UK adults use the internet to find out about goods and services
* The increase in use of social media and online networks has continued to grow while traditional channels like newspapers and printed materials have declined.
* 70% of all internet users use social media sites

Objective 2: The marketing strategy will review how we can increase the number of unique visitors to the website by March 2030 compared to 2020/21, with a view to support the increase of Company reach to disabled people.

**Social Media**

Disability Positive uses various social media platforms. The latest ONS data from 2020 highlights that the number of UK disabled adults using social media sites is now at 70% of all internet users [[4]](#footnote-4):

A 12-month digital marketing and communication plan has been created as part of this strategy and objective to optimise use of digital means, as set out in **Appendix B** to help achieve this and ensure that articles and case studies are added to the website on a regular basis.

Understanding the characteristics of our customers will allow us to effectively communicate with them by their preferred communication method and engage with them on services that may be of particular interest to them. Improved customer insight is critical as communications and marketing move beyond the traditional demographic groupings, it will allow a greater knowledge and understanding of the behaviours, motivations, and preferences of individuals.

Objective 3: The marketing strategy will review how we can increase the number of followers on social media platforms by March 2030 compared to 2020/21.

# Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis

The Company has several powerful strengths on which to build. Table 3 below summarises the main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

*Table 3: Disability Positive strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** | **Weaknesses** |
|  |  |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
|  |  |

# Marketing Strategy

**Product Strategy**

Disability Positive will promote all services, opportunities and voice with all the features highlighted in the Product Review section of this strategy, tailored to the audiences. However, this will focus on promoting income generating functions. All aspects of the marketing mix will be consistent with the brand.

Disability Positive will be positioned on a “trusted, ambitious and representative” value proposition. This will allow for differentiation of the brand based on the product features, benefits and values. Marketing will focus on Disability Positive give customers more for their money in a variety of ways.

**People**

The Company has a small marketing team, managed by the Policy and Communications Manager, with oversight from the Head of Business Development and Operations. Relevant staff have received training in social media.

**Pricing**

There is limited price variation in this field, regarding charged for services, particularly among DPOs. However, it is difficult to ascertain pricing for contracted provision. For this reason, Disability Positive will operate on a full-cost recovery model as set out in our Finance and Financial Controls policy and use the information in the Funding and Income Generation strategy to gauge indicative pricing for contracts that are to be explored or engaged.

**Place**

The Company will operate in Cheshire and surrounding areas.

**Promotion**

In order to generate awareness, interest, desire and action from potential and existing customers, the Company will focus promotional resources on the following ideas for promotion:

| **Theme** | **Aims** | **Ideas for Promotion** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Positive about offering services that suit the needs of people with lived experience of disability or long-term health conditions**  **Positive about providing the opportunity for people with lived experience of disability or long-term conditions to be part of community life**  **Positive about providing the opportunity for people with lived experience of disability or long-term conditions to be part of community life (cont.)**  **Positive about giving a voice to people with lived experience of disability or long-term health conditions** |  |  |
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Objective 6: The marketing strategy will review how we can increase membership of the Company by March 2030 compared to 2020/21, to ensure that our services, opportunities and voice can be designed, delivered and developed together with people with lived experience of disability and long-term conditions.

Objective 5: Carry out a review of the key value proposition specifically for marketing new business to businesses/partners.

Objective 7: Marketing tactics for fundraising and corporate sponsorship will be reviewed and implemented during the lifetime of the strategy with a view to achieving xx% of our income as fundraising and corporate sponsorship, by March 2030 compared to 2020/21.

Objective 4: Marketing tactics for the proposals put forward for increasing income will be reviewed and implemented during the lifetime of the strategy with a view to supporting achievement of an additional £xx by March 2030 compared to 2020/21.

**Process**

All staff record interactions and the time taken, with customers, are recorded on a Case Recording Management System. The majority of services and opportunities delivered by a contract are free to the end user (disabled person), but the customer in these cases is a local authority or ICP. The process for delivery and contract monitoring requirements of each service has been clearly detailed in the associated service specification and tender response, which form part of the contract. Payment is usually paid in arrears, following Finance raising an invoice for the associated Purchase order number. Where the customer is the end user (disabled person) accessing a charged for service, payment is taken monthly by direct debit from their Care Account/Pre-payment card.

Information held by the services will be analysed and used together with profiling tools to allow us to achieve greater insight into customers’ lifestyles and behaviours. This will allow us to have a better understanding of all types of disabled customers including customers we have not reached before.

**Physical Evidence**

Disability Positive has a visual identity which shows clearly that it’s an ambitious charity who is working towards a world that is positive about people who have lived experience of disability and long-term health conditions. It’s bright and positive, just like us.

The logo is made up of an irregular shape to communicate that our society does not fit neatly into one ‘ideal’ and should not be expected to. The word positive takes up a larger portion of the logo and sits in the foreground. The addition of a ‘smile’ within this word enhances its friendly credentials also giving a visual cue to the supportive nature of our organisation. Our logo is bold, strong and unapologetic.

Images are an important part of our brand. They help to communicate who we are, show the people we support, and they also help to tell stories. Ideally these should be real-life photos. They should be positive, bright and focused on one or two people and their interaction. Using a wide range of people to ensure it shows the representation. Further details can be found in the Company’s brand guidelines.

**Philosophy**

For all customer audiences the Company believe and show through the branding and customer interaction:

**Our vision**

We want a world that is Disability Positive.

**Our values**

Positive: It’s not just our name, it’s how we approach every challenge and opportunity.

Collaborative: We don’t believe we can do everything ourselves; we love working with others who think like us;

Representative: We are here to be the voice of people living with disability and long-term health conditions;

Ambitious: We are not going to change the world without thinking big;

Trustworthy: We need to be a place where people feel safe and can come freely for honest and impartial advice and support.

In order to demonstrate this, we will communicate as one organisation, so that the message is consistent.

* We will engage with all our audiences, through channels which work for them.
* We will listen and ensure we are easy to talk to.
* We will deliver clear, consistent, honest and timely information to relevant audiences.
* We will ensure communications are delivered in plain English that is free from jargon and easy to understand available in different accessible formats.
* We will tailor communications for specific audiences.
* We will work in partnership to ensure messages are consistent and timely.
* We will deliver clear, creative, and value-for-money communication campaigns and activity based on the outcomes that matter our customers.
* We will ensure Company brand and profile are maintained and enhanced so that all our audiences recognise Disability Positive’s role in helping disabled people to live well.
* All published promotional, information material, advertising, and building signage should conform to our Company style as set out in the Branding Guidelines
* We will enhance reputation and build trust by being consistent and transparent in everything we do and say.
* We will ensure our members and staff are informed and engaged in all we do.

# Actions

Activities will take an evidence based and customer focused approach ensuring resources are allocated to achieve the desired outcome. To achieve this, the marketing budgets will be centralised, and resource prioritised based on the following criteria.

* Strength of alignment with the Company’s Strategic objectives
* Strength of alignment with policy, customer need and performance targets
* Strength of potential to generate income for Disability Positive
* Potential to protect or enhance customer satisfaction.
* The contribution communications can make to achieve the desired outcome.

Underneath this strategy will sit an annual delivery plan setting out the tasks that will help us to achieve the objectives of the strategy. Some of the key delivery elements of the strategy will include:

**Digital** – we need to design services, opportunities and voice that are easily accessible and simple to use, so that those people that have a preference to use the internet will use them.

**Brand** – our brand will continue to reinforce the “ambitious charity who is working towards a world that is positive about people who have lived experience of disability, just like us” message. This will become increasingly challenging as more services are being delivered through different models, so promoting our brand visibility will be critical.

**Social media** – we need to maximise the use of social media to make sure that as many people as possible are engaged. Social media allows us to obtain information and gain understanding on what is going on in different areas, connect and listen to what people have to say and get messages out. It can also be used to advertise and promote services and activities and allows us to segment and target particular groups based on their demographics, this could be based for example on their age or location. We can use this to further understand the needs of our customers and target specific groups that would have a higher preference to the service/activity that you are offering.

**Media** – the power of the media (including online news websites and magazines) continues in its influence and authority, but social media is playing an increasing role in determining reputation. This shift will need to be reflected in the way that resources are deployed over the coming years.

**Employee engagement** – delivery has increasingly moved to a more two-way approach. Digital will continue to play an increasing role as the nature of the work force changes and this shift will need to be reflected.

**Campaigns** – targeted marketing campaigns will be delivered to directly support business objectives.

**Email marketing –** this represents a marketing channel where people can sign up for membership to receive news alerts from the Company on a range of subject matters. Getting the right mix of communications channels (whether online or offline or a combination of both) is key.

# Budgets

A key outcome of good communication and marketing is to improve both customer satisfaction and financial position of the Company. It is important that Marketing resources are directed at where they can make the biggest impact in both of these areas.

Customer satisfaction - by protecting reputation or targeting one of the three

main drivers of this measure. These are:

* How informed people feel
* Value for money perceptions
* How able people feel they can influence decision making

Financial position -by generating income and making savings. These are:

* Income generation - Campaigns and effective marketing has the potential to

deliver substantial amounts of income in the coming year as a result of increased service take-up.

* Savings - by using digital and telephone channels, where possible to find information, engage or transact with us, where possible and it is cost effective to do so.

The marketing budget for 2023/24 should be £xx, this should be increased to £xx by 2029/30. This would equate to an average of x% of total generated income per year, over the life of the 10-year Strategy. Table 4 below summarises the key annual marketing costs.

*Table 4: Disability Positive annual marketing budget*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **2022/23 Proposed**  **Annual Budget** |
| **(£)** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Total Budget** |  |

# Controls

The headline outcomes of this strategy will be evaluated against the objectives set out in section 2. Success will be determined by the following measures:

* Customer satisfaction levels
* Income generation
* Savings through channel shift and delivery of digital transactions
* Cost avoidance – collaborative working with services to support the reporting of cost avoidance achieved.

These outcomes will be measured by customer feedback and annual surveys.

In evaluating digital communications, we will have a greater understanding of the services and topics that drive engagement and start to understand what people find most interesting. This, coupled with the evaluation of specific campaigns, will help us to shape the message and method of delivery in future.

# Appendix A: Current Services, Opportunities and Voice

**Advocacy**

**Telephone Information Advice Line**

**Arrangement of Care and Support Service**

**Payroll**

**Supported Banking**

**Learning Service**

**Befriending**

**Youth Group**

**Adult Activity Group**

**Community Connections**

**Sensory Hive**

**Buzz Youth Group**

**Volunteer Opportunities**

**Membership**

**Policy Influencing**

**Training**

# Appendix B: 12-Month Digital Marketing and Communications Plan

| **#** | **Month** | **Date** | **Type** | **Title** | **Outline** | **Call to Action** | **Area of Business** | **Channel** | **Who?** | **Notes** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

# Appendix C: Unique Value Proposition

Our Services

help people living with disability and their families

who want help with everyday life, to feel part of your local community and look after your own wellbeing

by providing advice, help with practical tasks, advocating for you in lots of different situations and being listened to by people who understand

and improve their health and wellbeing, choice and control

1. NCVO (2022).*UK Civil Society Almanac 2022.* Retrieved from: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/news-and-insights/news-index/uk-civil-society-almanac-2022/executive-summary/#/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. ONS (2015). 2015 *Dataset: Internet Access-Households and Individuals*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/datasets/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividualsreferencetables> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. ONS (2020). 2020 *Dataset: Internet Access-Households and Individuals*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/datasets/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividualsreferencetables> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. ONS (2020). 2020 *Dataset: Internet Access-Households and Individuals*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/datasets/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividualsreferencetables> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)